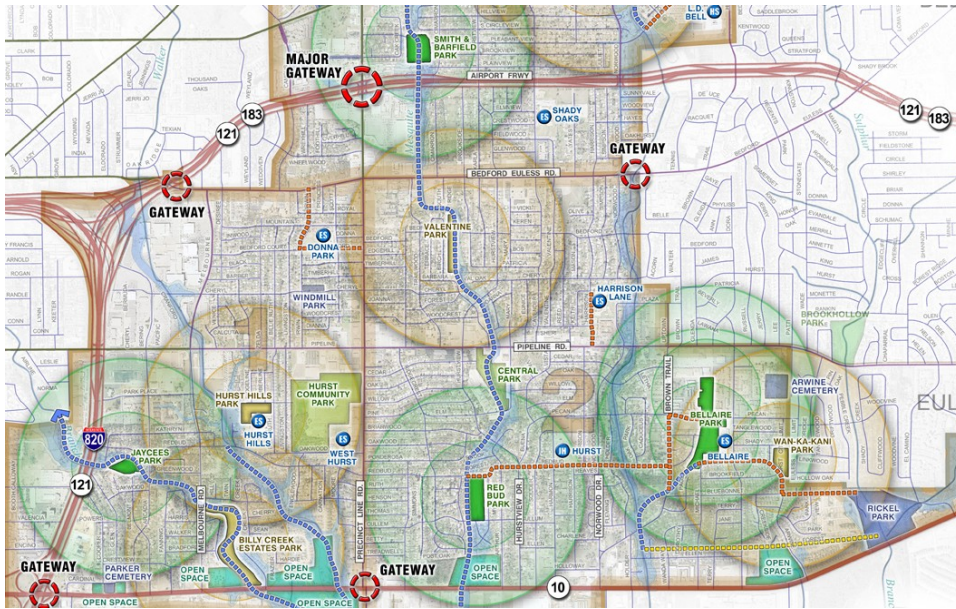




## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan



## 6. Needs Assessment

The *Needs Assessment* is the most critical component of the parks master planning effort. An assessment of what deficiencies exist in the parks system is vital so that actions can be developed that address those deficiencies. It is also important to determine future needs and develop the necessary action plan to address these effectively.

In essence, a needs assessment is an analytical way of assessing what facilities are most needed and desired by the citizens of Hurst, and determining which needs are the most critical. All identified needs are prioritized to form the basis for developing an action plan for the City.

Three techniques were used in evaluating the City of Hurst's current and future park needs. These techniques follow general methodologies accepted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for local park master plans and by the Department of the Interior for local park system Recovery Action Plans (RAP).

### 6.1 Introduction

*An assessment of deficiencies is vital so that appropriate actions can be developed.*

### 6.2 Methods of Assessing Park Needs



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

---

1. **Standard-Based Approach** - uses standards established by the local jurisdiction (in this case the City of Hurst) to determine the quantity of park facilities required to meet the City's needs at a given population. Standards usually are expressed as the quantity of park facilities needed to adequately serve every 1,000 citizens of the City.

Standards are established to provide the level of service that the particular jurisdiction believes is most responsive to the amount of use and the interests of its citizens. This plan establishes individual standards for the City of Hurst.

2. **Demand-Based Approach** - uses participation rates, league usage data, and surveys to determine how much the population uses and desires certain types of recreation facilities.

3. **Resource-Based Approach** - is based on the usefulness of available physical resources to provide recreation opportunities. For example, the City's creek and drainage system provides opportunities for trail connections.

All three methods are important in their own way, but individually do not represent the entire picture. This assessment, and the recommendations resulting from it, uses findings from all three methods to determine what types of recreation facilities and park requirements are needed in Hurst.



*The pond at Chisholm Park is enjoyed by many.*



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

National guidelines and standards are based on demographic trends rather than specific local desires, requiring that they be fine-tuned to meet local conditions. It is important to recognize that national standards are simply guidelines or benchmarks that are intended to serve as a starting point for park planning. Each city has its own unique geographic, demographic, and socio-economic composition, and as such, the arbitrary application of national standards, as is often done, would not necessarily meet the needs of that particular community.

***Local needs and desires are used as the guiding criteria to mold national guidelines to meet the expectations of the citizens of Hurst in a realistic manner.***

### 6.3 Standard Based Needs

*Park standards are guidelines allowing Hurst to compare itself to other similar Cities, and to assess where its citizens want it to be.*

Three types of park standards were used to analyze the parks and recreation needs of the City of Hurst. These include:

- **Spatial or Park Acreage Standards** - these define the acres of park land needed, and are usually expressed as a ratio of park acreage to population;
- **Facility Standards** - these define the number of facilities recommended to serve each particular recreation need. Facility standards are usually expressed as a ratio of units of a particular facility per population size. For example, a facility standard for basketball might be one court for every 5,000 inhabitants of a city; and
- **Development Standards** - these define the exact spatial requirements for a specific recreation area e.g. a neighborhood park versus a community park. These recommended standards are contained in Chapter 3.

**Figure 6.1 – Types of Park Standards**

The recommendations for each type of standard and approach are as follows:

The purpose of spatial standards for parks and recreational areas is to ensure that sufficient area is allocated to allow for all the outdoor recreation needs of a community. They allow a city to plan ahead, so that parkland can be targeted and acquired before it is developed. These spatial standards are expressed as the number of acres of parkland per 1,000 inhabitants.

### 6.4 Park Acreage Standards



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

The national recommended spatial standards for cities in general are shown in Figure 6.2 below.



**Figure 6.2 – Park Acreage Guidelines Based on National Recommended Standards**

### **6.5 Target Standards for Hurst**

The nationally recommended spatial standards as presented in Figure 6.2 above were adapted to develop target standards for Hurst's particular situation. These are expressed in terms of:

- Neighborhood Parks (developed and undeveloped)
- Community Parks
- Special Purpose Parks
- Linear Parks
- Open Space
- Regional Parks

The 2005 target standards for park acreage are based on the national and regional averages followed by consultant interpretation. These parkland target standards for Hurst are presented in Table 6.1 and are summarized in Figure 6.3 below.



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

### Close to Home Parks

- **Neighborhood Parks** - Target Standard – 2.0 acres per 1,000 population
- **Community Parks**- Target Standard – 3.0 acres per 1,000 population
- **Special Purpose Parks** - Target Standard – 3.0 acres per 1,000 population

**Total Recommended Close to Home Parks Standards – 8.0 acres per 1,000 population**

### Other City Wide Parks

- **Linear Parks** – Target Standard – 2.5 acres per 1,000 population
- **Open Space** – Target Standard – 1.5 acres per 1,000 population
- **Regional Parks** – No standard established

**Total Recommended Standards for Other Parks - 4.0 acres per 1,000 population**

***Figure 6.3 – Park Acreage Target for Hurst***

The 2005 target standard for park land acreage including all type of parks is 12 acres per 1,000 population. For the 2005 population of 37,100 this standard translates to a target of 444 acres park land for the City of Hurst.

Park acreage currently dedicated to park land (both developed and undeveloped parks) totals 280 acres. This constitutes a deficit of 164 acres when compared to the target standard of 444 acres.



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

Reasoning for the recommended spatial target standard for Hurst is in part based on a comparison with nationally recommended standards and existing national and local spatial ratios.

### 6.6

#### **Park Acreage Comparisons**

##### **Existing park acreage compared to the nation and the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex**

###### **City wide developed and undeveloped park area per 1,000 residents**

- Current City of Hurst developed and undeveloped park acreage = 280 Acres.
- This is an equivalent to 7.5 acres parkland for every 1,000 residents in Hurst.
- The national average is 11 acres parkland per 1,000 residents, which translated to Hurst, is 408 acres.
- Hurst is at 68 % of the national average, which constitutes a **deficit of 128 acres**.
- The Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex average is 14.17 acres per 1,000 residents, which translated to Hurst, is 526 acres. Hurst is thus 51 % of the metroplex average, which constitutes a **deficit of 246 acres**.

#### **National and Regional Comparison**

###### **Park area as a percentage of City area\***

- Park area in City of Hurst = 4.3% (280 / 6,382 acres).
- National average = 8.1% which translated to Hurst is 517 acres and constitutes a **deficit of 237 acres**.
- City of Dallas = 10% which translated to Hurst is 638 acres and constitutes a **deficit of 358 acres**.
- DFW Metroplex = 4.8% which translated to Hurst is 306 acres and constitutes a **deficit of 26 acres\***.

\* *It is important to note that the comparison of park acreage as a percentage of City area can be misleading. The comparison with other cities in the DFW Metroplex includes both undeveloped and built-out cities. Undeveloped cities typically will have less acreage dedicated to park land thus resulting in a relatively low ratio of park acreage per city area.*

Compared to national standards, Hurst has a deficit of between 128 and 237 acres. Compared to local standards, Hurst has a deficit of between 26 and 246 acres.

Based on the Hurst 2005 standard of 444 acres, the deficit for Hurst is set at 166 acres.



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

A comparison of the Hurst 2005 target standards of 444 acres of parkland with the nation and the Dallas / Fort Worth Metroplex, reveals the following:

### Hurst acreage per target standard of 444 acres compared to the nation and the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex

#### City wide park acreage

Meeting the 2005 target standard will lead to Hurst being:

- 109% of the national average of 11 acres per 1,000 residents; and
- 85% of the Metroplex average of 14.17 acres per 1,000 residents.

#### Park acreage of 444 acres as a percentage of city area

- As a percentage of the City area, the Hurst target standard will lead to 7% in comparison to the national average of 8.1%; and the City of Dallas average of 10%.
- A target standard of 444 acres for the city of Hurst translates in a goal of 166 acres additional.

It is recognized that Hurst is almost completely “built-out” which makes the acquisition of undeveloped land for parkland very difficult. However various options are available to acquire land for parks including existing vacant land and land subject to flooding along the creeks and drainage channels. Not all vacant land will be suitable, though. The criteria for suitable land for parks include size, location and potential connectivity to schools, other parks and places of worship. Another criterion is vacant land adjacent to existing parks. Important considerations include situations where existing infrastructure decreases the initial capital investment and/or where the newly acquired land add quality to the existing park. Two examples are the Hurst Athletic Complex and Hurst Hills Neighborhood Park.

### **6.7 Existing Conditions in Hurst**

The standard of 2 acres of neighborhood parks for every 1,000 residents reflects the importance of having nearby parks for the residents of Hurst. Hurst currently has 37 acres of developed neighborhood parks for a population of 37,100. On a citywide basis, the City currently has a ratio of 1.0 acre per 1,000 population, which represents a deficit of 37 acres.

### **Developed Neighborhood Parks in Hurst**





## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

Table 6.2 below summarizes the current developed neighborhood park acreage on a citywide basis.

**Table 6.2 Developed Neighborhood Parks in Hurst Today**

- Current Acres - 37 Acres (developed)
- **Target Standard - 2 acres per 1,000 population**
- **Current ratio - 1 acre per 1,000 population**
- Current Needs with 37,100 estimated population - **74 acres** (deficit of 37 acres) - Existing developed acres are 50% of target standard

Undeveloped neighborhood parks in Hurst constitute 22 acres. Added to the developed park land a total of 59 acres are currently dedicated to future neighborhood parks. Table 6.3 below summarizes the current DEVELOPED and UNDEVELOPED acreage on a citywide basis.

***Developed AND Undeveloped Neighborhood Parks in Hurst***

**Table 6.3 Developed & Undeveloped Neighborhood Parks combined in Hurst**

- Current Acres - 59 Acres (37 developed & 22 undeveloped)
- **Target Standard - 2 acres per 1,000 population**
- **Current ratio of developed & undeveloped parks - 1.6 acres per 1,000 population**
- Current Needs with 37,100 estimated population - **74 acres** (deficit of 15 acres)
- Existing available acres (developed and undeveloped) are 80% of target standard

Development of the undeveloped neighborhood parks would add 22 acres and would significantly reduce the current neighborhood park deficit. It is thus imperative that the undeveloped parks be developed in order to decrease the current deficiency of 50% to 20%. However, even when all land currently dedicated to neighborhood parks is developed, there will still be a lack of neighborhood parks in the far north section of Hurst as well as the area surrounding the Hurst Athletic Complex.

*It is imperative that all undeveloped park land be developed.*

One of the goals of neighborhood parks is that they be associated with schools. Of the ten schools in Hurst, only three neighborhood parks are associated with a school: Bellaire Park, Vivagene Copeland Park (both adjacent to Bellaire Elementary School) and Hurst Hills Park (as yet undeveloped and located adjacent to Hurst Hills Elementary School).

*The ideal is to have neighborhood parks associated with schools.*





## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

One school, West Hurst Elementary, is located adjacent to Hurst Community Park.

The Community and Special Purpose Parks contain excellent facilities, and as a result, these parks are highly utilized. Since these parks also serve as *de facto* neighborhood parks for the areas around them, they are heavily used and could potentially deteriorate from overuse.

### ***Community & Special Purpose Parks in Hurst***

Together Community and Special Purpose Parks in Hurst are fairly well distributed in the City. Chisholm Park and the Hurst Athletic Complex are located in the northern part of Hurst. Central Park, the Hurst Community Park and Rickel Park are located in the southern part of Hurst. Both the far north and the middle sections of Hurst surrounding Highway 183 are less served by Community and Special Purpose Parks.

Tables 6.4 and 6.5 below summarize the citywide Community and Special Purpose Park supply in Hurst today.

**Table 6.4 Community Parks in Hurst Today**

- Current Acres – 112 Acres
- **Target Standard – 3 acres per 1,000 population**
- **Current ratio – 3 acres per 1,000 population**
- Current Needs with 37,100 population – **111 acres** (no deficit)
- Existing acres are 100% of target standard

The City meets the recommended target standard of 3 acres per 1,000 population for Community Parks.

**Table 6.5 Special Purpose Parks in Hurst Today**

- Current Acres – 73 Acres
- **Target Standard – 3 acres per 1,000 population**
- **Current ratio – 2 acres per 1,000 population**
- Current Needs with 37,100 population – **111 acres** (deficit of 38 acres)
- Existing acres are 66% of target standard



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

Based on a recommended standard of 3 acres per 1,000 population for Special Purpose Parks, the City has at present, a deficit of 38 acres. The Attitude (Telephone) Survey identified a need for special purpose facilities including nature areas, an additional recreation center with facilities including a gymnasium, natatorium and amphitheater. It is recommended that a concerted effort be made to acquire land for additional Special Purpose Parks where possible.

Other types of parks that respond to specific physical conditions in the City or to specific needs are also part of the park system. These include linear parks, regional parks and open space. Recommended acreage standards for each of these other types of park areas are shown in Table 6.6 below, and described in the section below.

### ***Other types of Parks***

**Table 6.6 Other Types of Parks**

#### **Regional Parks**

- Current Acres – 0 Acres
- **Target Standard for Regional Parks** – No standard set for Hurst

#### **Linear Parks**

- Current Acres – 36 Acres
- **Target Standard for Linear Parks, Linkage Corridors, & Greenbelts** - target goal of 2.5 acres per 1,000 population
- **Current ratio of Linear Parks – 1 acre per 1,000 population**
- Current Needs with 37,100 population – **92.5 acres** (deficit of 56.5 acres)
- Existing Linear Park acres are 39% of target standard

#### **Open Space**

- Current Acres – 0 Acres
- **Target Standard for Open Space** - target goal of 1.5 acres per 1,000 population
- Current Needs with 37,100 population – **55.5 acres** (deficit of 55.5 acres)
- Existing Open Space acres are 0% of target standard



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

---

### ***Linear Parks and Trails in Hurst***

**Linear parks** – Hurst has significant opportunities for linear parks along its creeks, drainage corridors, utility corridors and right-of-ways that traverse the city. Linear parks can connect parks and key areas of the City e.g. schools, and are relatively inexpensive to develop. These corridors can be used for trails and to address the need for additional park acreage in the City. Many of the potential linear park corridors are in flood zones.

A target goal of 2.5 acres of linear parks for every 1,000 residents has been established. This goal is far from absolute, and is only established to begin to encourage the acquisition of linear park corridors along creeks and utility corridors. This goal of 2.5 acres of linear parks or corridors per 1,000 population ratio equates to 92.5 acres of linear park/linkage corridors in Hurst.

Hurst has several immediate opportunities for linear park corridors. These include:

#### ■ **Drainage corridors**

Many streams, creeks and drainage ways are available for linear park development. Land along creeks and drainage channels does not need to be very wide. The main criterion is the measure of connectivity that it will provide.

Property owners with land subjected to destructive floods may find it beneficial to part with such land. The City should make a concerted effort to inquire about flood prone land which may be suited for recreational facilities including trails, open space and nature-watching opportunities.

Paragraph 6.11: Resource Based Assessment describes the use of creeks and drainage ways as trail corridors.

#### ■ **TXU electric utility right-of-way**

The TXU utility right-of-way in Hurst totals 6.64 miles. The average width of this right-of-way is 100 feet. However the main function will never be park land. A trail corridor width of 25 feet over a distance of 6.64 miles translates to 20 acres available for recreation.

Paragraph 6.11: Resource Based Assessment describes the use of the TXU electrical utility right-of-way as a trail corridor.

#### ■ **Railway line**

Railway line corridors are ideal for the use of trails. The Cottonbelt Trail section through Hurst is currently under development adjacent to the Dallas Area Transit (DART) easement at a length of 1 mile. This constitutes 3 acres of land available for recreation. See the Trails Map (end of Chapter 9).



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

---

According to the Facility Standards, a distance of 13.25 miles of trail is recommended, additional to the existing 5.75 paved trails (schools included). At an average width of 25 feet, 13.25 miles constitute 40 acres to allocate to linear park acreage. Added to the current 36 acres of linear parks, it will constitute 82% of the goal of 92.5 acres linear park.

**Open Space** – It is important for cities to have land that remains in an undeveloped state. One only has to travel into other cities that are rapidly developing in Texas to see the need and importance of open space preserves. These preserves add green space to the City, and break up the continuous bands of buildings and streets that characterize most cities. Open space is defined as land, which is not programmed for any specific active recreation purpose. However, its value may typically be defined as visual, ecological, providing compensation for impermeable surfaces including parking lots and roofs, as well as for bio-filtering and buffering between incompatible land uses. Open spaces are becoming increasingly valuable and precious in the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex.

### ***Open Space Needs in Hurst***

Hurst is nearly 100% built-out which makes it very difficult to secure additional open space. Based on the target acreage of open space for the city (1.5 acres per 1,000 population), the deficit of open space is calculated at 55.5 acres. The current acreage of vacant land in the City of Hurst amounts to about 190 acres which constitute the sum total of all individual vacant spaces larger than 5 acres. It is recommended that every effort possible be made to secure land that can be dedicated as open space park land.

The map Vacant Land at the end of Chapter 8 presents the location of all vacant land in the City of Hurst.

**Regional parks** – Hurst currently has no regional park, although Rickel Park, which is currently categorized as a Special Purpose Park, may possibly be classified as such. The unique geological formations in the park provide the impetus for its current status as a Special Purpose Park, yet this same natural quality, together with trails and picnic facilities, lends itself to regional interest and thus the status of a Regional Park. For the purpose of the 2006 Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan, the status of Rickel Park is not changed.

### ***Regional Parks***

A vacant 33-acre site in the most northern part of the City, may prove to be the ideal site for a regional park containing a regional recreation center. The benefit of such a location is that it will provide recreation amenities in a part of the City that is relatively under-served and generate income from the surrounding Cities of North Richland Hills and Colleyville.

The 2005 acreage recommendation of 12 acres per 1,000 is in line with the 1997 Parks Master Plan that recommended a standard of 12.2 acres per 1,000 population. The 1997 standard constituted 432 acres total for the City at the time; the deficit at the time was calculated at 152 acres.

### ***Park Acreage and the 1997 Parks Master Plan***



## Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan

The 2005 recommended standard constitutes 444 acres and the deficit is calculated at 156 acres. These higher numbers are due to the population increase from 35,500 in 1997 to 37,100 in 2005.

Table 6.7 below summarizes the key spatial needs for the next 5 to 10 years for Hurst, and forms a crucial part of the 2006 Parks and Recreation Programming Master Plan recommendations in Chapter 8.

**Table 6.7 Summary of Key Acreage Needs**

### **Neighborhood Parks**

- Existing developed acres are 50% of the target standard.
- Need to develop undeveloped parkland to reach 80% of target standard.
- Need to acquire additional land of at least 15 acres to meet target standard.

### **Community Parks**

- The current acreage meets the target standard of 3 acres per 1,000 population.
- No additional park acreage needed.

### **Special Purpose Parks**

- A minimum of 38 acres of land is needed for a Special Purpose Park in order to meet the target standard of 3 acres per 1,000 population.

### **Regional Parks**

- Hurst currently has no acreage need for a regional park, yet the City will benefit from a regional recreation center in the far northern part of the City.

### **Linear Parks**

- All land currently dedicated to Linear Parks is undeveloped.
- Once developed this will constitute only 39% of the target standard.
- Need to acquire additional land of at least 56.5 acres to meet target standard.

### **Open Space**

- No land is currently dedicated to Open Space.
- Need to acquire additional land of 55.5 acres to meet target standard.

### **Citywide Acreage Needs**

- Sum of all target goals recommends 12 acres per 1,000 population.
- Current ratio is 6 developed acres per 1,000 population
- With the development of all currently undeveloped park land and no additional acreage, citywide ratio increases to 7.55 acres per 1,000 residents of Hurst. This represents a deficit of 4.45 acres per 1,000 population or a deficit of 164 acres total from the target goal of 444 acres.

Table 6.8 on the next 2 pages summarizes the 2005 target standard for recreation facilities.